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ABSTRACT

Recent developments in cognitive anthropology, in particular the development of ethnographic semantics, make ethnographic methods more systematic. The goal is to replace intuition with an operationally explicit methodology for discerning how people construe their world of experience from the way they talk about it. The first part of this paper describes the operationally explicit methods referred to by the rubric, ethnographic semantics, and illustrates the use of these methods with examples from a study of a successful principal in Fayette County, Pennsylvaniia. Part two presents findings from this study. The final section of the paper uses this study as the basis for critiquing the utility of ethnographic semantics for studying principals and other educational leaders. (BW)

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COGNITIVE ANTHROPOLOGY AND RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE PRINCIPALS: FINDINGS FROM A STUDY AND REFLECTIONS ON ITS METHODS

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Recent studies of schools almost invariably identify the principal's leadership as a significant factor in a school's success (see, for example, Mackenzie, 1983). Unfortunately, these studies provide only limited insight into how principals contribute to their schools' achievements. There is some indication, however, that a school's attitudinal climate -- what one researcher has labeled a school's ethos -- may be an important mediating variable between the principal's actions and school success (Rutter, 1979). If attitudes, beliefs, and meanings are indeed variables which mediate between the principal's actions and a school's effectiveness, it seems important for researchers studying successful principals to incorporate into their research designs methods which will reveal the phenomenological perspectives of their subjects.

Anthropologists have traditionally sought to understand the perspectives of the subjects they have studied (Malinowski, 1922, 1935; Boas, 1943; Firth, 1936). More recent developments in cognitive anthropology, in particular the development of ethnographic semantics, make ethnographic methods more systematic. The goal of cognitive anthropologists is to replace intuition, the traditional methodological mechanism employed by emic-oriented anthropologists, with what one cognitive anthropologist describes as an

"operationally explicit methodology for discerning how people construe their world of experience from the way they talk about it" (Frake, 1962, p. 74).

The first part of this paper describes the operationally explicit methods referred to by the rubric, ethnographic semantics, and illustrates the use of these methods with examples from a study of a successful principal conducted by the author. Part two presents findings from this study. The final section of the paper uses this study as the basis for critiquing the utility of ethnographic semantics for studying principals and other educational leaders. These three major sections of the paper are prefaced by a brief description of the study.

The Study

The study was actually a descriptive evaluation commissioned by The Rockefeller Brothers' Fund. The fund had previously held a competition which identified ten schools within the United States which, in the opinion of a panel arts education experts which reviewed documentary evidence and conducted site visits, had truly exemplary arts programs. After the panel identifed the ten schools, ten additional researchers were hired to do descriptive studies of each site.

Researchers were given considerable freedom to define the focus of their particular studies. The expectation was that each researcher would select

what was most interesting at his or her particular site and focus the study accordingly. While German Central's program which included work in the visual arts, music, and drama, provided many intriguing possibilities for study, the most interesting aspect of this particular school's award-winning arts program was that an award-winning program existed at all.

Fayette County, Pennsylvania, where German Central is located is a most unlikely place to find any sort of award-winning educational program. At the time of the study, the county had the highest rates of infant mortality, crime, and arson per capita of any county in Pennsylvania. The county also had one of the highest rates of child abuse in the state as well as 22 percent illiteracy and 28.6 percent unemployment rates.

The fact that German Central was recognized for excellence in the arts in especially surprising. The surrounding community is hardly the sort of place where parents expect schools to prepare their children for gallary openings and nights at the opera. German Central Elementary School is located in mining country. While the study was being conducted, fully costumed members of The White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan picketed in front of the high school to protest as school board decisions, and policemen stood in front of each high school auditorium exit and guarded each stairway to the auditorium's stage during the two public meetings attended by this researcher which were called to discuss the board's decision. Given this environment, it is not surprising that the local superintendent of schools declared the

arts "marginal" parts of the district's curriculum.

Despite the superintendent's declarations and the less than favorable environment supplied by the surrounding community, German Central Elementary School had created an arts program which was judged exceptional by a panel of experts in the field. During interviews, school people, as well as members of the community, consistently accounted for the success of German Central's arts program (as well as for most everything else that went on at German Central) by pointing to the school's principal. Members of The Rockefeller Brothers' Fund Awards Selection Panel also cited the principal's leadership as a determining factor.

In time, attributing the school's success to the principal's leadership made sense even to a researcher who was both professionally socialized to be skeptical of "Great Person" theories of organizational change and highly cognizant of human beings' tendency to commit what social psychologists call the fundamental attribution error (i.e., the tendency of human beings to attribute causality to personal characteristics rather than structural or organizational factors (Harvey and Kidd, 1976)). There was simply no evidence to support rival explanations.

The "evaluation" of German Central Elementary School's arts education program, therefore, turned into a study of a principal and his influence on that program and the school in general. Central to this study was a

methodological approach which cognitive anthropologists refer to as ethnographic semantics.

Ethnographic Semantics

Proponents of ethnographic semantics start with the assumption that thought is, to a large extend, mirrored in language. Therefore, they emphasize the analysis of their subjects' linguistic structures as a means of understanding their subjects' cogntive structures (Spradley 1972, 1980; Goodenough 1964; Frake 1962). The methods of analysis cognitive anthropologists have developed were initially used to study relativety isolated and homogeneous -- what some would call "primitive" -- cultures (Frake 1964; Nelson 1969). The methodology has also been used, however, to study subcultures within complex societies including our own. Spradley (1971) for example, has employed the methodology to study the perceptions of drunks in Seattle and the judges who sentenced them. Others have used the methods of ethnographic semantics to study such diverse topics as cocktail waitressing (Spradley and Mann 1975), ethnic categorization in Lebanon (Starr 1978), and the category scheme used by an interpreter of the deaf (Verin, 1978).

Spradley's (1979, 1977) step by step description is probably the most systematic account of ethnographic semantics that currently exists. Some would argue the account is too systematic: even ethnographic methods which

aspire to operational explicitness can never be divided into discrete, sequentially ordered operations without oversimplifying the way anthropological inquiry is actually conducted. There is considerable evidence, however, that even in controlled, laboratory research, discussions of methodology rely on a reconstructed logic which is as much an expression of the researchers' ideal procedures as it is a description of the history of actual studies. Thus, Spradley's step-by-step account of cognitve anthropologists' methods which is outlined below can be appreciated for its heuristic value even through it suggests a process which is much more linear and far more simplified than the field work in which cognitive anthropologists actually engage.

Description Oriented Questioning. After access to the research site is gained and key informants have been identified (following procedures which do not differ from procedures anthropologists have traditionally used to accomplish these two purposes), the researcher asks a series of questions designed to get the informant to talk about what he or she does. Initially descriptive questions are quite general and open-ended. Spradley refers to the most general, most open-ended, questions as grand tour questions. Sometimes these questions quite literally ask for a tour ("Could you show me around the school?"). More frequently the term, tour, is simply used as a metaphor ("Would you describe your profesional experiences from the time you graduated from college until the time you became principal of this school?").

Responses to grand tour questions frequently generate more focused description-oriented questions. Spradley refers to these as mini-tour questions (e.g., "You indicated you developed the non-graded approach to education when you were still a classroom teacher; can you describe your non-graded classroom for me?"). Spradley also lists three other kinds of descriptive questions: (1) example questions (e.g., "Can you give me an example of "personal closeness as strategy?") (2) experience questions (e.g., "Could you tell me about some experiences you had when you first became a principal?") and (3) native-language questions (e.g., "What would teachers call personal closeness?").

As informants respond to description oriented questions, the role of the researcher is to attend to and record the precise language the informant uses in his or her response. (In the German Central study a tape recorder was used during most interviews to insure that informants' own terminology was not lost.) Records of the informants' responses to description oriented quesions, then, became the basis for the next step in the research process outlined by Spradley.

Search for Domains. The next step involves a search for domains in the records of informants' responses to descriptive questions. Spradley (1979) defines a domain as "any symbolic category that includes other categories" (p.100), and he indicates that a domain has four elements: (1) a cover term, (2) two or more included terms, (3) a single semantic relationship, and (4) a

boundary.

The four elements of a domain can be illustrated by focusing on the term personal closeness, a term the principal in the German Central study used quite frequently during interviews as, for example, in his comments about his relationship with the school's music teacher:

> She came in here about eight years ago--a very traditional person. I pushed her and pushed her and extended her... She got very angry with me. She doesn't like me to use my authority because I force her to do things... Sometimes I'm angry. I say this is what we're going to do. And sometimes I put my arm around her and give her personal closeness and give her a hug.

An examination of descriptive questions revealed that the term personal closeness functioned as a cover term in the principal's discourse, a cover term which subsumed three included terms: "personal closeness as strategy," "personal closeness as being sensitive to a need." (also referred to by the principal as "friendship type of personal closeness" and "caring closeness"), and "personal closeness for growth." All three of these included terms display a single semantic relationship to the cover term: they are all kinds of personal closeness. The principal's comments quoted above also suggest

that the concept of personal closeness has clear boundaries, for he indicates that using ones authority and getting angry are not kinds of personal closeness.

A single covering term may form the basis for numerous domains which focus on different semantic relationships and, therefore, different included terms. Figure 1 illustrates two domains emerging from an analysis of principal's use of the covering term, personal closeness.

Figure 1

Asking Structural Questions. After initial domain analysis has been completed, Spradley recommends using this preliminary analysis as the basis for a second round of questioning. During this second round of interviews, structural questions concerning the domains which have been identified are integrated with descriptive questions. Most structural questions will relate to domain covering terms. For example, in interviews conducted after I completed the domain analysis in Figure 1, I asked the principal, "What are all the different kinds of personal closeness." Questions related to other

aspects of the domains might also be asked. For example, the researcher might ask about included terms (e.g., "Is using your authority a kind of personal closeness?").

The purpose of asking structural questions is twofold. First, structural questions enable the researcher to verify preliminary domain analysis. Second, these questions provide additional information to expand and refine preliminary analysis.

Taxonomic Analysis. The additional data netted by structure oriented questions can then be organized into folk taxonomies. A folk taxonomy, like a domain, describes a single semantic relationship. Folk taxonomies differ from domains, however, in that they organize folk terms in a domain hierarchically into sets and subsets. Figure 2 illustrates a folk taxonomy constructed from the principal interview data in the German Central study.

Figure 2

Asking Contrast Questions. Folk taxonomies, once constructed, help guide a final stage of questioning. During this stage, constrast questions

are incorporated into interviews. Spardley discusses seven types of contrast questions (See Spradley, 1979, pp. 160-172). The purpose of all types however, is either to ferret out attributes of included terms within a domain or taxonomy or to verify hypotheses about attributes which have already been developed as a result of earlier analysis. For example, in the German Central study, the principal was repeatedly asked how "personal closeness for strategy" differed from "personal closeness as being sensitive to a need."

Making a Compotential Analysis. Responses to contrast questions provide the necessary data to conduct a compotential analysis which Spradley (1979) defines as "The systematic search for the attributes (components of meaning) associated with cultural symbols" (p. 174). Figure 3 presents the results of a compotential analysis of the various forms of personal closeness the principal initially identified. The various attributes listed in Figure 3 are, of course, attributes the principal himself articulated.

Figure 3

Findings

The focus of this discussion now switches from research methods to findings produced by these methods. At the outset it is important to note that ethnographic semantics methodology was not the only methodology employed in the German Central study. More conventional, open-ended interviewing and participant observation, in fact, netted a series of generalizations about the principal and his influence as well as a wealth of evidence to support and triangulate these generalizations. Traditional methodology, for example, revealed and provided support for the following generalizations: (1) The principal had the authority to hire new faculty members, and he both actively recruited faculty members he believed to be good and transferred teachers who did not measure up to his expectations. (2) The principal viewed himself as the school's instructional leader and made time to play this role by either refusing to do bureacratic chores assigned to district principals or delegating these chores to subordinates. (3) The principal consciously fostered a sense of team spirt within the school by either encouraging or mandating involvement in group projects such as a grade level theatrical productions. (4) Although the principal's emphasis was on fostering positive interpersonal relationships (between himself and his teachers as well as between teacher and teacher), the principal also understood the importance of creating organizational arrangements which facilitated the development of positive relationships (e.g., he structured the schedule to insure that each

grade level term had a common free period daily). (5) A positive interpersonal climate was not seen merely as an end in itself but was seen by the principal as a means for promoting a more productive staff. (6) The principal was a superb fund raiser (the school's art program, in fact, was financed in large part by solicited funds which supplemented the school district's relatively meager budget). (For further discussion of these findings, see Donmoyer, 1983.)

Traditional methodology also revealed an additional generalization about more personal aspects of the principal's leadership style: the principal was both a domineering, authoritarian leader and a permissive, democratic one. Despite the apparent contradition inherent in this generalization, evidence to support it was considerable.

Members of the community who were interviewed about the principal described virtually two different people. A parent who became a volunteer in the school several years ago said of Guappone, "You feel free to go and talk to him and he's just very supportive and easy to talk to." Similarly, a mother of a German Central student smiled as she indicated Dr. Guappone was like a father to German Central students, while the cashier for the town fire company's Wednesday night bingo game chuckled as he reflected on Guappone's work as a principal and indicated, "Carmen puts his heart in it."

Others said quite different things, however. An older couple described

a man of "retribution" and a parent described a man who is "an extremist about everything." A school board member indicated Guappone had accumulated in excess of 400 student suspension days during one 180-day school year (The superintendent would not confirm an exact number but indicated Guappone's suspension rate was greater than the combined student suspension days of all other district schools including the two high schools), and a mother whose first grade son was suspended for three days for writing on the bathroom wall, indicated Guappone is an administrator who does what he wants no matter what parents say or do.

The ambiguity which emerged in interviews with members of the community was not resolved by talking with those who work for Guappone. They obviously enjoyed working with him and talked about the freedom and the support he provided. They also talked about mandates and demands. It was not uncommon for both kinds of talk to come from the same person during the same conversation.

Initial interviews with Guappone, himself, only contributed to the confusion. On one occasion, for example, a description of his democratically-oriented team management plan was almost immediately followed by a discussion of his mandates.

Finally, observation data are consistent with interview data. One

interesting observation: Most staff members alternated between calling their principal Carmen and Dr. Guappone.

The principal's apparently contradictory behavior suggested the need for close scrutiny if the more personal aspects of his leadership style are to be understood. The importance of such understanding is suggested by the fact that the principal and those who work for him indicate that Guappone's personal characteristics are the most important aspects of his leadership style. For example, the school's music teacher observed,

> In spite of all the differences I have with him, I still like him as a person and I think I work for him for that reason. You can get more people to work for you if they like you than you can by telling them, "I'm the boss, and what I say is right."

It was in looking more closely at the personal characteristics of Guappone's leadership that the methods of ethnographic semantics were employed. Even here, however, they were not used initially. At first, more traditional data collection techniques provided a wealth of information about the more personal aspects of Guappone's leadership style and constructs from social science were employed to catalogue the data traditional methods netted. For example, my field notes describe innumerable occasions on which

Guappone praised staff members and, penciled in the margin beside such descriptions is the term, positive social reinforcement. Similarly constructs from contemporary political science -- constructs such as self interest, side payments, and political favor-trading -- were used to characterize such behaviors as Guappone's flexibility with respect to teacher arrival and departure times and his use of a Title I aide to cover a teachers' class if they had personal problem such as a hospitalized parent or spouse. Such characterizations are certainly consistent with Guappone's own explication of his motives: "I'm going to get twice as much back or more by the personal closeness bit," he said.

In time constructs from contemporary political science and behaviorist psychology began to appear less than adequate, however. The notion of positive reinforcement, for example, conveys a sense of calculation and manipulation which is not totally absent from Dr. Guappone's dealings with people but still somehow manages to distort as much as it reveals. Similarly, constructs from political science convey a sense of calculating self-interest which does not quite fit the phenomena being studied.

Some indication of the inadequacies of social science constructs came when Dr. Guappone was asked what he would do if teachers refused to honor one of his mandates such as his mandate that teachers at each grade level will put on at least one major musical play a year with their students. He tried to answer the question. He talked, for example, about sitting down with

teachers and explaining the many benefits of doing plays. Finally, however, he became a bit frustrated with what, for him, was a nonsensical question and he said, "I don't think they would do that in the first place, O.K.? I don't think they would tell me that because they know I wouldn't accept it. They would know that wouldn't do any good."

Responses like the one above suggested the need to more fully understand Guappone's frame of reference, and it was a recognition of this need which brought the methodology of ethnographic semantics into play. I began by questioning the principal about the term, personal closeness, a term which my field notes and interview transcripts revealed he used quite frequently. Findings from this line of questioning have already been presented in Figures 1, 2, and 3. What follows is a brief narrative description of results.

Initial probing produced only a nebulous definition of personal closeness: "an interpersonal relationship between people." Futher questioning, however, revealed that personal closeness was one of three included terms under the cover term, " <u>ways principals can get people to do what he wants them to do.</u> " The other two included terms were "being great" and "fear."

Guappone unabashedly acknowledged employing the "being great" tactic. He also incicated that many principals employ fear as their primary method of achieving their goals and that he himself relied on fear to manage his

classroom when he first started teaching. He noted, "You can scare the hell out of people to get people to do things, you know. If you frighten them enough, they'll do what you want."

Fear, however, has unfortunate side effects. It does not make people happy and "Keeping people happy is very important, even though you have to sacrifice what you want as a principal. Happiness is important because of productivity." Therefore, Guappone indicated he had abandoned fear as a management strategy and had substituted personal closeness instead. "I just think that in all probability it's the best strategy to operate a school successfully," he said.

Further probing also revealed that there are various kinds of personal closeness. Initially he described two: "peronal closeness as strategy" and "personal closeness as being sensitive to a need or because someone needs sensitivity" (also referred to by Guappone as "friendship type of personal closeness" and "caring closeness").

The strategy sort of personal closeness, Guappone noted, is normally "short term and it ends when you get what you want." Interestingly, he had trouble responding to a request for an example of this sort of personal closeness. Finally, after much probing, he relied on a hypothetical one. He indicated he could have used the strategy sort of personal closeness on a school board member with whom he had fueded publically. Guappone declared,

"I should have used him to get the educational needs that I have, and I destroyed that [possibility] and that wasn't wise."

The sensitivity type of personal closeness, Guappone indicated, "involves a friendship and a caring for each other." It is a thing of enjoyment. You enjoy being with each other and interacting, you know, and spending time with each other and just visiting each other..." Such closeness is established through "long-term type things". Teasing is an example, ("When you tease them gently, you develop a lot of personal closeness.") "Sitting down and talking and talking and talking and talking" is another.

Guappone had no difficulty finding examples of the sensitivity variant of personal closeness. He cited his ongoing conversations with a female member of the faculty who was having difficulty having a baby ("Gosh it's hell wanting a baby and not being able to have one!"). He talked also of holding a child the previous day, a child who may have a serious bone disease and whose arm had "terrible cramps." He said of the girl's cramped arm,

> I tried to massage it and I just couldn't get it out. So she just put her arms around me and I just held her until her mother came... She doesn't have a father, you know, and it was very acceptable for her to hug me. Like your daughter when she's crying, she'll just hug you.

He added, "Teachers do things like that. I have had teachers just hug me when they were upset."

On one of the occasions on which I interviewed Guappone about personal closeness, he was especially concerned about one of his teachers:

> His mother's very ill, and he cries and cries. And I try to help him because my Mother and Dad just both died lately and Susan [Dr. Guappone's daughter] was sick and my Mother-in-law died and I just went through a lot of that, and I know how difficult it is when you're in that position. You don't know what's going to happen. Your mind runs away with you, and he tries to be strong, but he's not. You know, he just broke down, you know. He needs help, and you've got to help him.

As Dr. Guappone continued responding to questions, the line between "personal closeness as strategy" and "personal closeness as being sensitive to a need" began to blur. For example, he introduced a new construct, "personal closeness for growth," and the relationship of this construct to other constructs was not clear. His example of personal closeness for growth involved long term conversations with an insecure first grade teacher to

build up her confidence. This example suggested that his use of personal closeness for growth was motivated at least as much by a professional need to make her into an effective teacher as by a concern for her personally. In fact, he readily acknowledged that "I had to use both [types of personal closeness] with her and sometimes you use both."

This same blend of strategy and sensitivity also cropped up when Guappone discussed his personal closeness relationship with parent volunteers in the school. He talked, for example, of teasing two of them (gently, of course), of calling them "the dynamic duo" ("They like when I do that:"), and he indicated he and another volunteer aide who along with her husband had recently come back to the area and brought a small farm "sit down and talk farming all the time." When asked why he did these things, for example, why he spent his time "talking farming" with the one volunteer, he indicated there were several reasons. First, he indicated he liked the parent, and then he indicated, "I'm interested in farming, too." He went on to acknowledge yet another interest, however:

> I'm interested in her working too. I like them [the volunteers] and they know I like them. And they work their butts off for us free. Hours and hours and hours! Volunteer time... You can't inspire people if they don't know you like them.

This same Machiavellian tinged brew of sensitivity personal closeness is at times served up to members of the faculty.

> Sometimes I'll have someone break-up you know, and they come in all upset, crying. You get all sorts of problems, home problems, they bring in. Then you say, "How can I make them productive?" I have to listen. That's where you're fatherly and grandfatherly.

As Guappone responded to additional structural and contrast questions, the line between the two types of personal closeness he originally articulated not only became less distinct; eventually Guappone erased it completely. Not only did he indicate that the sensitivity sort of closeness may often be tinged with strategy, he went on to describe additional defining characteristics of the personal closeness relationship which logically precluded a purely strategic type of personal closeness. He indicated, for example, that "you have to be sincere or intelligent people will know that you're not sincere." He also unequivocally stated that a personal closeness relationship means that you are "very honest and open with each other." Clearly these requirements of sincerity, honesty and openness severely inhibit the use of personal closeness for purely strategic purposes.

Rather than a rigid distinction between strategy and sensitivity forms of personal closeness, therefore, one is left with only a continuum. What is more, an exclusively Machiavellian sense of strategy does not even appear to be included on the continuum despite Guappone's valiant efforts to assimilate such a conception into his thinking. Eventually even he concluded that personal closeness will only work with people who like each other, otherwise "it's false."

Put another way, Guappone can only manipulate his friends. This restriction is really not so strange if the world is viewed through Dr. Guappone's eyes. His world is not the same space inhabited by behaviorist psychologists and most contemporary political scientists. There are few self-interested rational actors populating his reality and people in his world do not play a zero-sum game. His world is more akin to places envisioned by Rousseau and John Dewey. It is a place where the individual good and the common good are inextricably linked and where individual self-interest can only be realized through shared communal purposes, a place where a leader can simultaneously serve his own interests, the group's interests, and the interests of each individual group member.

Other members of the school culture did not appear to use the term personal closeness. They used other terminology to describe the principal and their relationship with him which suggested they shared the principal's gemeinschaft oriented conception of authority. For example, several teachers

used the term " gentle persuasion " to refer to the principal's tactics; a laugh normally accompanied the mentioning of this term. Similarly, the school's music teacher, after indicating her dislike of the principal's authoritarian ways, distinguished between two types of principals: "ones who can be touched" and "ones who can't be touched." She indicated Guappone was clearly in the former category and suggested she worked for him for that reason. (Figure 4 presents the attributes of each type of principal as articulated by the music teacher).

Figure 4

Assessment of Ethnographic Semantics' Utility

The German Central study can provide some basis for assessing the utility of ethnographic semantics for studying successful principals in particular and educational leaders in general. To be sure, the study involved only one case, and, therefore, the generalizability of the study's findings -- whether they be substantive findings or findings about the utility of methods -- is suspect. In addition, the methodology of

ethnographic semantics was not part of the German Central study's initial design. The researcher simply pulled the techniques out of his bag of methodological tricks in response to a perceived need which arose during the course of data collection. Furthermore, the researcher, though trained in various ethnographic and other qualitative research techniques, was not trained as a cognitive anthropologist. Thus, the study is far from a pure example of ethnographic semantics research. With these caveats duly noted, however, the German Central study can serve as a valuable heuristic for examining the potential contribution ethnographic semantics might make to research in educational administration. The study suggests potential strengths as well as possible limitations of cognitive anthropologists' methods.

Strengths. On the credit side, the study provides evidence to counter the frequent charge that ethnographic semantics' systemization must be purchased at the price of trivial findings (See, for example, Chandler and Sherp, 1974). While previous studies may certainly have netted findings which might be judged trivial, the German Central study provides evidence that trivial results are not a necessary consequence of using ethnographic semantics techniques. The use of social science constructs to catagorize the personal aspects of the German Central principal's leadership would have seriously undermined the study's internal validity. Ethnographic semantic techniques provided an alternative set of categories -- categories participants themselves used -- to characterize significant findings, as well

as a means to explicate the specialized meanings participants attributed to the terms they used.

Additional advantages also become apparent, when ethnographic semantics methodology is contrasted with more traditional, intuitive methods of getting at an emic or insider's perspective. The former, in contrast to the latter, (1) clearly articulates a procedure for data collection and analysis, (2) is not overly time consuming, (3) makes systematic reliability checks and even replication studies possible.

Limitations. Although ethnographic semantics made a major contribution to internal validity in the German Central study, this study also suggests major limitations of these methods. Some of these limitations are not so much limitations of specific ethnographic semantics techniques as limitations of the whole insider's or emic orientation to study research. Anthropologists have long cautioned researchers against "going native" to such extent that the researcher could no longer see the culture being studied from an outsider's perspective, and the German Central study suggests that it is indeed prudent for researchers to heed such caution. In the German Central study, for example, insiders -- i.e., German Central's current staff and especially its principal -- often lacked a sense of history. For example, they appeared to underestimate the contribution of certain of the principal's more authoritarian tactics (e.g. transferring faculty members judged inadequate) which had played a major role in the school's history but

which, in recent years, had been overshadowed by tactics encompassed by the term, personal closeness. To an analytical outsider it appears that Guappone's fear-oriented tactics could only be abandoned after they had been successful, i.e. after they had provided Guappone with the kind of staff he wanted and the kind of staff who would respond appropriately to his use of personal closeness. This information would probably have been missed by any researcher operating exclusively from an emic orientation, even emic-oriented researchers employing the techniques of ethnographic semantics. This historical persective, however, is essential to persons who wish to use Guappone as a model of a successful principal and to incorporate his methods, including the "method" of personal closeness, in their own leadership style.

Beyond general problems with an emic orientation, the German Central study also reveals problems with ethnographic semantics in particular. Two of these problems are variations on a traditonal criticism of ethnographic semantics, the criticism which questions the assumption that thought is mirrored in language (Harris, 1974). The problem here, however, is not so much the traditional problem that subjects know more than they can say. While one could certainly find evidence to support the proposition that subjects' tacit knowledge exceeded what could be expressed in language (indeed such a proposition is a virtual truism), what is impressive in this study is that subjects, in particular the principal, could say so much and articulate their cultural knowedge so well.

The problem is that what subjects could say and, by implication, what they knew is not nearly as neatly and logically organized as cognitive anthropologists' taxonomies suggest. The narrative description above, for example, reveals that, initially, Guappone's discussion of personal closeness contained contradictions and inconsistencies. While subsequent questioning exposed these inconsistencies and contradictions to the subject and, as a consequence, led him to modify his description of personal closeness to overcome them, such modifications exemplify the sort of reactivity social scientists attempt to guard against. Furthermore, even with modifications, Guappone's conception of personal closeness appeared to be best imaged as a continuum with somewhat loosely defined subcatagories rather than as the sort of pristine, tightly organized taxonomies cognitive anthropologists have used

to display their subjects' thinking.

Social science, of course, always abstracts from, and, in the process, oversimplifies and distorts phenomena. There are indications, however, that at least in the German Central study, the use of the taxonomic form to characterize subjects' thinking is not a minor, insignificant distortion. One of the more fasinating and, quite possibly, most significant characteristics of Carmen Guappone's actions is his ability to make apparently contradictory behaviors and beliefs peacefully coexist within his leadership style. Peaceful coexistence is certainly facilitated by a conceptual scheme which is not as tightly organized as cognitive anthropologist's taxonomies and domains portray. To state this point more generally: folk wisdom which does not require logical consistency and unselfconsciously incorporates antithetical positions may be highly functional for educational leaders who must operate within a highly complex, multidimentional context; research procedures which arbitrarily impose an order or such folk wisdom may, in the process, also impose a significant bias on research findings.

It may well be that cognitive anthropologists' data collection methods may be more useful to students of educational leadership than anthropologist's preferred methods of organizing and portraying data. The sort of reconstructed history of the interview process demonstrated in the above narrative may be a better way of presenting data gathered by

researchers using cognitive anthropologists' interview techniques.

One other apparent limitation of cognitive anthropologists' portrayal methods is such methods' tendency to strip away the expressive, non-conceptual aspects of interviewees' responses. This stripping away becomes obvious when one compares the above narrative presentation of data about personal closeness with the summary presentation in Figures 1, 2, 3. A more focused example may make this stripping away phenomenon even more obvious. Compare, for example, the communication potential of Figure 4 with what is communicated by a brief quotation from the school's music teacher.

> In spite of all the differences I have with him, I still like him as a person and I think I work for him for that reason. He's a friend, too. He gets involved with us, you know. He comes in the room and sits down and just has a nice conversation with us. And he likes you. And he talks to you and treats you like a person, not like he's the boss, even though he says he's the boss and I call him the boss and he is. He's not one that can't be touched.

Human beings are more than a collection of cognitive constructs, and it is not surprising, therefore, that many students of human behavior have emphasized the importance of choosing modes of reporting research which are capable of communicating the more expressive, affect laden aspects of human interaction. Several early anthropologists followed the lead of Bandelier (1890) and wrote novels to communcate their research findings. Similarly in recent times, various researchers have advocated the use of literary techniques such as metaphor, plot, and theme to communciate researchers' non-fictionalized results to their audience (See, e.g. Eisner, 1979 and Kelly, 1975).

It may not be desirable to go to such extremes, yet it seems equally undesirable to rely too heavily on the antiseptic modes of reporting preferred by cognitive anthropologists. At least in the German Central study, affect is a significant part of the principal's leadership style and any mode of reporting which cannot adequately communicate this aspect of the phenomena threatens the study's validity.

Conclusion

The philospher of social science, Schutz (1970), has written:

> The world of nature, as explored by the natural

> scientist, does not "mean" anything to molecules, atoms, and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist--social reality--has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting, and thinking within it. By a series of commonsense constructs they have pre-selected and preinterpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives. It is these thought objects of theirs which determine their behavior by motivating it... Thus, the constructs of the social sciences are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree, that is constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene. (pp. 11-12)

The methodology of ethnographic semantics provides a systematic means of gaining access to the constructs of research subjects. The study reported in this paper demonstrates that this methodology is not without its limitations. This study also suggests, however, that, when used in combination with other data collection, analysis and reporting procedures, ethnographic semantics can make a significant contribution to the study of educational leaders.

Figure 1: Two Domains Involving The Same Covering Term But Different Semantic Relationships

Included Terms	Semantic Relationship	Cover Term
-Personal Closeness as strategy -Being sensitive to a need -Personal Closenness for growth	is a kind of	Personal Closeness
-Because you like a person -Getting people to do what you want -Keeping people happy -Making people productive -Because people need it -Enjoyment -To help people grow (professionally) -Making people happy -Inspiring people	is a reason for	Personal Closeness

Figure 2. Taxonomy of German Central Principal's Conception of Kinds of Ways a Principal Can Get People to Do What the Principal Wants.

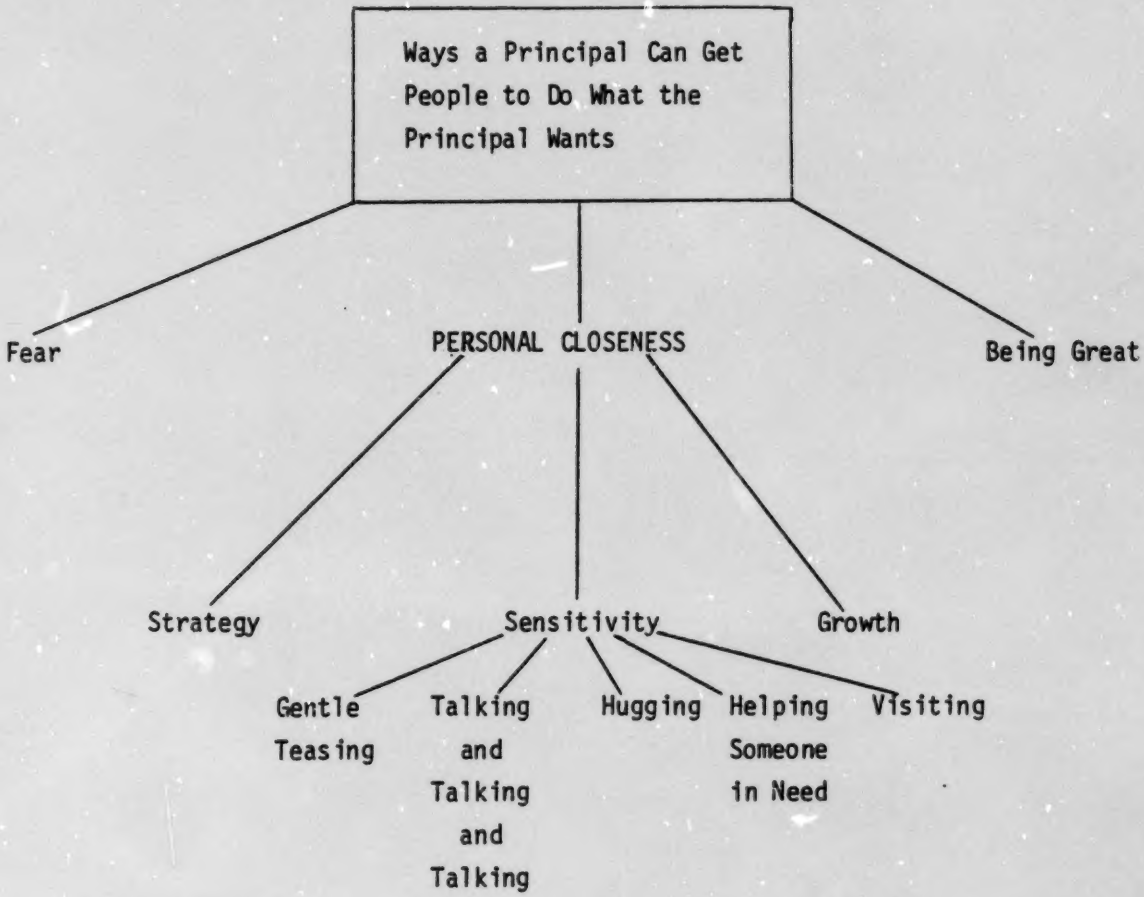

Figure 3. Principal's Conception of Two Types of Personal Closeness

Contrast Set	Dimensions of Contrast							
	is long term	is short term	Involves friendship and caring for each other	is a thing of enjoyment	requires honesty	involves being honest and open with each other	helps a principal get what he wants	ends when a principal gets what he wants
Personal closeness as strategy	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal closeness as being sensitive to a need	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Figure 4. Music Teachers' Conception of Two Types of Principals

	Dimensions of Contrast										
Contrast Set	a friend	gets involved with staff	staff likes as person	staff works because it likes principal as person	has nice conversation with staff	likes staff members	talks to staff & treats as persons	doesn't treat staff like he's boss	says he's boss	staff members call him the boss	is the boss
Principals who can be touched	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Principals who can't be touched	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Note

1. Statistics are for Fayette County, Pennsylvania. With the exception of the unemployment statistic, all figures are taken from "Welfare Law Passage Ironic Timing for Area," by G. Orsini, Herald Standard , Uniontown, Pennsylvania, May 16, 1982, A-3. The unemployment statistic is for the month of January 1983, and was provided by the Office of Employment Security in Uniontown.

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